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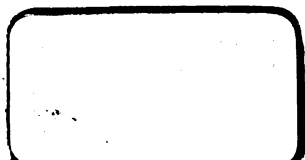


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GOING HOME.

BY

JOHN V. BASSETT.

"Here in the body pent,
Absent from Him I roam;
Yet nightly pitch my moving tent
A day's march nearer home."

LONDON:
WILLIAM FREEMAN, 102 FLEET STREET.
1865.



P R E F A C E.

“WORK while it is called to-day, for the night cometh when no man can work,” was the injunction Christ gave to His people when tabernacled on this earth. Various are the spheres in which this command can be obeyed. Some in preaching the ever-blessed gospel, publishing the glad tidings of salvation. Some to sow seed by the way-side, and distribute tracts from house to house. Some to instruct in the Sabbath-school, in training the rising generation in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Others to administer relief in some way to the poor; give words of comfort to the distressed; cheer

the orphan ; speak words of consolation to the mourning widow ; and a multitude of other ways,—all in some measure imitating the noble example of Him whose whole life was spent in doing good.

The reader, in perusing the following pages, will find a short sketch of one who has lately passed from earth to heaven. The father died some years ago, leaving the wife and son to battle through life the best way possible. She being advanced in age, and worn down by numerous trials, had long been unable to perform much work. Therefore the son (with the exception of a friend or two) was her only support.

Again she has had to pass through another painful ordeal. God, in His all-wise providence, has seen proper to take the son, the only child, from her in his youthful days. Now she is left alone in the world, poor indeed in circumstances, and still weaker in body. But that

her remaining days may not be spent in deeper poverty, that her pathway may be somewhat smoothed, and that the sorrowful heart may be bound up, the writer, to effect it to some extent, has adopted this plan, in sending forth this little book, and the profits arising from it will be devoted to this Christian widow, sincerely hoping the object will be accomplished, at the same time praying it may be made a blessing in gaining the salvation of sinners, cheering the Christian, and bringing much honour to Jesus.

J. V. B.

HOLSWORTHY.



GOING HOME.

GOING HOME!—How sweet the thought! So thinks the weather-beaten mariner, after having been away from home for many years. Travelled some thousands of miles across the deep briny ocean, tossed about by many a storm, dashed against many a craggy rock, drifted upon sand-banks, lodged upon some lonely island, withstood many a rough tempest, whilst thunder pealed in awful solemnity, and lightning blazed in rapid succession, with a score of other dangers to which he has been exposed. How consolatory must be the thought of GOING HOME!

GOING HOME!—How sweet the thought! So thinks the soldier who is in the field of carnage, surrounded by heaps of dead and dying,

left weltering in their blood. There, amidst the deadly havoc of red-hot shot and destructive bomshells, the clashing of swords, the roaring of cannons, listening to the faint sigh, and wiping the death-dew from the pale countenance of a suffering comrade.

But how cheering the thought, that after all his arduous toil, the hair's-breadth escapes he has had, he is *GOING HOME!* Home to his native land, home to his wife and children, home to greet his father and mother, brothers and sisters! With what delight does he hail the sound of peace! How cheering the prospect that he shall again fill the vacant seat around the old fireside, and mingle their voices together, as in days of yore!

GOING HOME!—How sweet the thought! So thinks the prodigal who has absconded from home, forsaken that father who had always been so kind, and that mother who had ever been loving and affectionate, thrown himself wild upon the world, associating with the reckless in the haunts of vice and degradation, "spending his substance in riotous living." But ere long

beggary stares him in the face, destitution shears him of all his worldly enjoyments, his boon-companions turn their back upon him, and in this miserable, pitiable, and wretched condition, he reflects upon the past, thinks about home. And, oh! what tender and endearing associations then cluster around that hallowed spot! The thought of it melts the obdurate heart, the eyes which have long been tearless are now suffused with tears, and the resolution is made, "I will arise and go to my father." How sweet at this crisis must be the thought of GOING HOME.

GOING HOME!—How sweet the thought! So thinks the labouring man who leaves his little cottage early in the morning, and toils hard beneath the scorching sun, or stern winter's shivering blasts, to gain the bread which perisheth. But when sable evening comes, wearily he wends his way homeward, yet gladdened with the thought of the happy faces he will find there, and the hearty welcome he will receive from the little ones. The tiny tales and many adventures of the day, like oft he has

heard before, and the cheerful smiles and kind words of his faithful companion in life, combined with the other, causes his toil-worn countenance to assume an air of cheerfulness and forget all his fatigue.

GOING HOME!—How sweet the thought! So thought poor Lazarus, the wayside beggar, who had long suffered the chilling hand of poverty—had again and again experienced privations, and the painful feelings of hunger—dragged his existence through this world in the deepest depths of adversity—sat begging at the rich man's gate—and gladly would have accepted a crust from some passers by, or a few crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. But instead of winning their sympathies, the dumb dogs were more humane, for they "came and licked the poor man's sores," administering, in some extent, relief to his emaciated body. Surely the thought of GOING HOME,—but not to an earthly one, for very possibly he had none but an heavenly one,—cheered him amidst all his wants and privations.

GOING HOME!—How sweet the thought!

So must have been the experience of St Paul, who was continually hunted about like a partridge upon the mountain top. Going from place to place, from country to country, undauntingly preaching Jesus and Him crucified. With fervent, unabated zeal and unflinching boldness uplifting the banner of redemption. Having the reproach and contempt of thousands whilst glorying in the Cross. Of the Jews five times received forty stripes, save one; thrice beaten with rods, once stoned, thrice suffered shipwreck, a night and a day in the deep. In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by his own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren. In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings and cold and nakedness. Surely the thought of *GOING HOME*, departing to be with Jesus, would be far better. To exchange earth's toils for heaven's eternal rest, earth's preaching for heaven's praises, earth's battles for heaven's sweet peace, earth's

conflicts for heaven's unceasing triumphs, earth's shadows for heaven's real and permanent glories.

GOING HOME!—How sweet the thought! So thinks the aged Christian whose locks have long grown white, his cheeks wrinkled, his steps feeble, his bark having sailed across life's tempestuous sea, nigh fourscore years; dashed about by a thousand storms; long been in the battle-field wielding his sword, battling with numerous foes, bearing his breastplate, wearing his helmet, fighting with the world, combating with a treacherous heart, and the antagonist of hell. Ofttimes his soul crushed beneath a load of sorrows, his confidence shattered by the wiles of the wicked one; his peace at a low ebb, his prospects of home nipped by many anxious cares. Yet the thought of GOING HOME keeps his head above the waves and his confidence in God alive, so that he is enabled to prosecute his journey thitherward, submitting all to the dispensations of a gracious Providence. And amidst all the vicissitudes, chances, and changes of his earthly pilgrimage, he is consoled with the assurance that ere long the last battle will be fought, and

in the last mortal struggle, angels will sweetly whisper—

“ Servant of God, well done !
Rest from thy loved employ ;
Thy battle’s fought, the victory’s won,
Enter thy Master’s joy.”

How sweet, then, the thought, how delightful the prospect of GOING HOME. Home with Jesus. Home with the prophets, the patriarchs, the apostles, and the innumerable company which have passed up through much tribulation. Home in heaven, the region of unchangeable happiness, the land of unsullied joy, the city of effulgent splendour, the “ Father’s house of many mansions.” To wear a crown resplendent with untarnished glory, a spotless robe washed in the precious blood of Christ, to gather around the tree of life, where grows no forbidden fruit ; to drink of the life-giving streams that gush from fountains that are never dry ; to bask in the sunlight beaming from the Sun of Righteousness ; to walk the golden streets, the green fields, and pluck the immortal flowers of Paradise ; to gaze on the jasper walls and the pearly

gates; to mount the everlasting hills of Zion, and breath the salubrious air of that "better country;" to join in the harmonious song which the redeemed perpetually sing; to be far beyond the soul-withering influences of sin, out of the reach of the stratagems and numerous plots of the supreme majesty of hell; to reside through an eternity of love under the soul-ravishing smiles of Jesus, and dwell in the immediate presence of the Triune Deity. His soul fired with such a glorious prospect, he trudges on the good old beaten path, and amidst all calumny, all opposition, all conflicts, all sorrows, he cheerfully sings the pilgrim's song—

"My rest is in heaven, my rest is not here;
Then why should I murmur when trials are near?
Be hushed, my sad spirit, the worst that can come
But shortens thy journey, and hastens thee home.

"It is not for me to be seeking my bliss,
And building my hopes in a region like this;
I look for a city which hands have not piled,
I pant for a country by sin undefiled.

"The winds of affliction around me may blow,
And dash my lone bark as I'm sailing below;
I smile at the storm as I lean on His breast,
And soon shall I land in the haven of rest.

“ Let trial and danger my progress oppose,
They only make heaven more sweet at the close ;
Come joy, or come sorrow, what e'er may befall,
A home with my God will make up for it all.”

Oh, then, how sweet the thought—GOING HOME !
It cheers the darkest hour, soothes the wounded
heart, calms the heaviest storm, lightens the
severest trial, smooths the roughest path, and
sweetens the bitterest cup.

GOING HOME !—How sweet the thought !
So have thought millions of Christians, and so
thought SAMUEL HOSKIN, who ceased to live on
earth, May 15, 1865.

Affliction is the common lot of all. Various
are the ways in which it is experienced. Yet
at all times its cup is composed of bitter ingre-
dients, at which our nature revolts. St Paul de-
clares it to be “ not joyous, but grievous.” But
we know the ways of God are all good. We
believe “ He is too wise to err, and too good to
be unkind.” Though affliction’s cup may be a
mixed one, yet its design is good ; and, when
sent, is intended by the Almighty to accomplish
some wise end ; and in all cases we ought sub-
missively to bow before Him, and say, “ It

is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good."

Samuel, the subject of the following brief sketch, was the only child of poor parents. His father, after a very short illness, died about three years ago. In order to gain a livelihood, he took in boots and shoes to repair; at times, when having an order, would make new. Samuel assisting him, they were enabled to earn just sufficient to subsist on. In consequence of the death of the father, their means were still more circumscribed; and the son, not being very strong, could not earn so much as if it had been otherwise. Sickness too often laid him aside, so that he did no work for days, or even weeks together. At times he rallied, so as to resume his occupation with an uncle. Thus month after month passed away, he and his frail mother proving the verity of the old saying, "One half the world knows not how the other half lives." And so at the present time she has just where to lay her head, no one to provide for her, and doubtless must pass her remaining days in penury. Yet, with Christian patience and re-

signation, she submits to all, come what may come, knowing God has vouchsafed to be "a husband to the widow," that He has promised to be in six troubles, and not to leave even in the seventh; and that by and by she will be gathered home, where partings and poverty are never known.

During a revival of pure religion in the Bible Christian Chapel, Holsworthy, some five years ago, Samuel was the subject of serious impressions. After a time he sought, and happily found, an interest in the cleansing blood of Christ. Many others obtained the same blessing, and from that period to this can bear pleasing testimony to the fact, that God has power on earth to forgive sins; whilst others, it is to be lamented, have made shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, have again turned their back upon the cross, and are now on the broad road to eternal perdition.

Samuel for a time ran well, but the enemy of souls played his warlike engines with satanic violence: his poisonous arrows were subtly directed toward him; and in some unguarded

moment he gave way to the tempter's power, losing his confidence in God.

Not long after, disease invaded his frame; yet at intervals he appeared to recover: but it afterwards proved to have taken a too firm hold, for not long after he was brought upon a sick-bed, which ultimately ended in death.

During his illness he often expressed his grief for his having acted so disobediently towards God. On one occasion, while conversing with him, he said, "After I fell back again, my conscience was continually telling me I did wrong." "In my heart I often wished I was among you as I once was." "I was miserable all the time." And oh! does not his experience corroborate the experience of most, yea, may I not say all, those who have backslidden. Their conscience is continually lashing them with the terrible fact, that they have, and still are, acting wrong,—that they are miserable; and that they find an aching void which the world can never fill.

Samuel would gladly have obliterated that part of his life, and sent it into annihilation, were it possible. But what a mercy for him

and all similar ones that God has promised to blot it out of the book of His remembrance upon again returning. Samuel followed the divine invitation. He again retraced his steps, made a second application to the blood he had trampled upon ; and finding it still retained its virtue, he was enabled by faith to look with implicit confidence to God as his reconciled Father ; and though his language was not the same, yet his heart could bear sure evidence to the truthfulness of these lines,—

“Those bleeding wounds which Jesus bore,
My refuge are, my only boast ;
Through these with joy to heaven I'll soar,
And mingle with the heavenly host.”

The first time I visited him, a dark cloud seemed to be hanging over his mind. Satan had been busy. His trust in Jesus appeared to be wavering,—his hopes somewhat blighted. But after some conversation and prayer, light dawned brighter upon his soul. The dark cloud of unbelief gave way before the brightness of the Son of Righteousness, and he could read his title clear to mansions in the sky.

At all times he felt grateful to God for the affliction he was called to endure; "for," said he, "I might have gone on in sin, and by and by have been lost for ever." "I would rather suffer this for a time than go down to hell."

The first question I usually asked was, "Well, Samuel, how do you feel by this time;" and sometimes, in answering, he would first have reference to his bodily sufferings, then say, "I feel that all's right." "I know if I should die I should go home to heaven."

During the whole of his affliction, after the first time I saw him, his eye was fixed steadily upon Christ; his will swallowed up in the will of God; having clear views of the insufficiency of all here below, esteeming above all other things an assured interest in Jesus, and the promises contained in the Bible sweeter than honey or the honeycomb. Others visited him from time to time, and always found him submissive to the dispensations of Providence, often expressing his wish to be enabled to attend the house of prayer, and how he should enjoy it if so privileged.

Not only was he resigned to the will of God, but to all on earth. Though poor, and probably deprived of many things he would have had had circumstances been different, yet up to his dying moment he never complained. No one ever heard him give utterance to a murmuring word, but always feeling thankful, and often expressed that feeling, by saying he had wanted for nothing. In fact, these were almost his last words,—“I’ve wanted for nothing.” True, many around were benevolent, constantly showing them acts of kindness by sending various things, to whom the bereaved mother feels a debt of everlasting gratitude.

His affliction soon wasted him to a mere skeleton, consequently extreme weakness was the result; therefore he could not say much, nor did he possess that Christian joy which many do while in the furnace of affliction.

The martyrs could praise God upon the stake, whilst the devouring flames were blazing around them, and burning the body to ashes.

Brainerd, in his last moments, could say, “I long to be in heaven, praising and glorifying

God with the angels. 'Tis sweet to me to think of eternity. I am almost there—I long to be there.”

Doddridge, passing from earth to heaven, exclaimed, “ I see indeed no prospect of recovery, yet my heart rejoiceth in my God and my Saviour ! Such transporting views of the heavenly world is my Father now indulging me with as no words can express ! ”

Scott, in the hour of dissolution, having the influence of the Holy Spirit richly dwelling in his heart, said, “ This is heaven begun. I have done with darkness for ever ; nothing remains but light and joy for ever.”

John Wesley, when on the threshold of time, verging on eternity, sweetly could sing—

“ I'll praise my maker whilst I've breath ;
And when my voice is lost in death
Praise shall employ my nobler powers.
My days of praise shall ne'er be past,
While life, and thought, and being last,
Or immortality endures.”

And thousands of Christians since that have been filled with holy rapture while on their deathbed. They have shouted and sung themselves across the cold surges of Jordan.

But this holy joy does not depend on outward circumstances, for whilst some do achieve such a noble conquest over the last enemy and exultingly pass into futurity, others calmly fall asleep in Jesus without even a word, a whisper, or sigh, yet not the less triumphant. Thus Samuel, though his mind was at perfect peace, his hopes bright for immortality, did not exult in praises and shout his way home to heaven, but calmly and patiently waited, saying with the poor old tried Job, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come." With a steady unshaken confidence he looked to God, and though he said but little, yet whenever asked how he felt as to dying, his answer was such as to enable one to rest assured that all was well.

On the same morning that he passed away, I was informed that "poor Samuel was dying." Not having seen him for several days, neither heard how he was, I was greatly surprised to hear he was so near death. Feeling desirous to see him once more this side the grave, I went as soon as possible.

Approaching near his bed he turned his pale

face towards me. I saw that death was evidently not far distant, yet not as far as I imagined. There by his side sat a neighbour and his heart-stricken mother. "We have just been talking about you," said they; "Samuel has been saying you would come in, but we have been telling him you would be busy and couldn't get away; but, 'Yes, he will; I am sure he will before I go,' he has been saying; and also, 'Tis beautiful—'tis all beautiful.'"

Repeating the same question to him that I had on former occasions, he gave a similar answer. But it was with great difficulty I understood what he said. His speech was very indistinct; the death-sweat was standing in big drops upon his pallid brow, and his breathing hard. Immediately after he fell into a sweet sleep, which lasted about five minutes. On again awaking he looked earnestly to me, and in a faltering voice said, "Perhaps you'll pray." But before engaging in prayer we had some further conversation. I quoted these lines:—

"'Tis religion that will give
Sweetest pleasures whilst we live."

"Yes," said he,

"And 'tis religion will supply
Solid comfort when we die."

Owing to weakness he could say no more. His mother then asked if he heard what I said? to which he nodded his head; and repeating the last two lines again, he answered in the same manner. During prayer his hopes seemed to brighten and his love increase; and when quoting the words of the Psalmist, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me; Thy rod and staff they comfort me," with a clear and distinct voice he said, "Yes."

His mother seeing that he would ere long be no more with her, frequently gave vent to her feelings by a burst of tears; this often pained his mind. "Mother, don't cry for me, we shall meet again in heaven," he would say.

The sands of time were now dropping, dropping fast; life was ebbing out apace, the moment of his dissolution was drawing near, death was approaching with rapid strides, yet he became more cheerful, his strength revived, his

speech more distinct, his voice stronger, and looking around to those standing by his bedside, said, "I'm quite comfortable. I've wanted for nothing;" and then sitting up, "There, I can sit up," said he.

A few moments after, he again lay back, and entered into conversation, evidently feeling desirous to tell us, or convince us of something he tried to explain, but failed, arising either from weakness or his mind somewhat wandered.

The icy fingers of death were now touching him, his feet were in the cold stream. He had laid his head upon the pillow to rise no more alive. His mother, bathed in tears, caught him in her arms, feeling unwilling to let him go. But the grim monster had received its warrant, signed by the Almighty. It performed its solemn work, struck the fatal blow, and in the stillness of these moments, only broken by the loud sobs of the poor mother, he peacefully fell asleep in Jesus, to wake up in a glorious eternity.

Thus died Samuel in the morning of life, at the early age of twenty. Without the shadow of a doubt, his soul was borne by guardian angels

to that celestial region where death is unknown, and sickness never experienced. He, though not blest with much of this world, yea, though poor in circumstances, is now rich in heaven.

How sweet, then, the thought of GOING HOME!

Christian—tried, tempted, and afflicted one—is not the thought of GOING HOME, home in heaven, sweet, cheering, and consoling? This world, you know, is not your home, you believe it is not to be your rest always, but are looking for a better one, a brighter one. Whether you are rich or poor, young or old; whether living in a palace, an ordinary house, or a little mud-wall cottage. Whether dwelling in a lonely hut, a gloomy garret, or magnificent mansion, it matters not; ere long you too will have to die, and leave it all behind, for you are only a stranger and probationer here for a short time. You are not stationary as yet, your bark is tossed about by the storms of life; neither will you be, until you reach the approaching region of immortal glory. Gazing steadfastly there, you look with pleasing anticipation to the time when you shall pace

across its golden floor, and exult in the lofty praises of that sinless world.

Though you "are often sorely discouraged because of the way, for the night is dark, the road is rough, the pilgrimage is long, the enemy is powerful, and the desert blasts are keen," yet oftentimes you have refreshing, heart-cheering seasons, coming from above whilst jogging on though this wilderness of trial. So refreshing that you are brought on to Pisgah's top, and with the eagle eye of faith, view the land which now seems afar off. God goes before you as a pillar of fire by night, and a pillar of cloud by day. He feeds you with manna, and supplies you with water from the rock.

Constantly, when assembled with the people of God, Jesus has manifested Himself for a short time; and under the influences of the Holy Spirit you have been in readiness to say, yea, have said—

"And if our fellowship below
In Jesus be so sweet,
What heights of rapture shall we know
When round His throne we meet?"

Experiencing something of that heavenly-minded

frame which the apostle Paul felt when he said, "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better." You have felt a foretaste of that "better country." It has been an antitype of future bliss. You were borne aloft upon the wings of love, right into the suburbs of heaven; scarcely could tell "whether in the body or out of the body." But, oh, this life is earthly! we are in a world where sin abounds, and it embitters almost every blessing. But beyond this life, where Jesus reigns, what tongue can tell, what heart conceive, the unspeakable happiness, the unutterable bliss, and the ineffable joy it will be to dwell there? "Here we see through a glass darkly, but there face to face." Neither will He manifest Himself for a little period only, and we have periodical blessings; but unveiling fresh glories from His inexhaustible store through the rolling ages of an unlimited eternity. Not only to see Him, but above all, to be like Him! Oh, what a prospect before you. Does not the thought of such amazing bliss constant joy create? and the hope of GOING HOME sweeten the ills of life, make

the rough places smooth, and the crooked places straight? Does not the assurance of one day reigning with the redeemed in glory, enable you to climb the high hills of difficulty with patience, and descend, if so ordained, into the dreary valley of adversity with submission?

You know there is no friend like Jesus, and no home like heaven. Thus, with an evidence that all is well, you look away home, and with a calm, holy reliance, stand upon the threshold of each succeeding night, saying with the poet—

“ One sweetly solemn thought
Comes to me o'er and o'er;
I'm nearer my home to-day
Than I've ever been before.
Nearer my Father's house,
Where the many mansions be;
Nearer the great white throne,
Nearer the crystal sea.

“ Nearer the bound of life,
Where we lay our burdens down;
Nearer leaving the cross,
Nearer gaining the crown.
Jesus, perfect my trust,
Strengthen the hand of my faith;
Let me feel Thee near when I stand
On the edge of the shore of death.”

Fellow-passenger, sailing across the boisterous sea of life, breast a few more storms, brave a few more hardships, keep your vessel rigged a little longer, and soon you will cast anchor in the broad bay of heaven, where a ripple is never seen, nor a storm ever known.

Fellow-soldier, enlisted under one banner, serving the same King, following the same Leader, fight a few more battles, wear your armour a few months or may be years more ; then you will leave an enemy's land, and when you come to cross the cold river, to enter into the peaceful country, you will go triumphantly over ; and there have an unfading crown, a branch of palm, a spotless robe, a celestial harp, and a seat at God's right hand.

Millions already have been transplanted, from this vale of tears, home to heaven. Thousands had much harder battles to fight than ever you will, endured severer trials than you are subject to, and had to wade through far hotter persecution than ever you will experience. Surely, then, if they came off so victorious, and are now around the throne, casting their

crowns at the feet of Jesus, you, with your comparatively few trials, and little persecution, will come off equally triumphant.

Doubtless, many of your dear friends are gone there to swell the great congregation :

“ In a milder clime they dwell,
Region of eternal day.”

Do I address a husband, whose faithful companion and partner in life has been taken away ? a wife, whose earthly support has been torn away by the rude hand of death ? a sister, who has lost a kind brother ? a brother, who has had to part with an affectionate sister ? or may be a parent, who has been bereft of a darling child, or perhaps more ? Ah, yes. Few Christians are exempt from this. How true—

“ Death, with impartial hand, strikes wide the door
Of royal halls and hovels of the poor.”

Neither has he passed by your house untouched. He has, sometime or other, entered, and made inroads in your family. The fireside circle has been broken. The vacant seat at the table is daily seen. It may be, the painful event happened long, long ago, yet it remains as fresh

upon your memory as if a thing of yesterday. Or perhaps it is of more recent date. You may be even now wearing the habiliment of mourning. You remember the last look, the last smile, the last words. You never can forget it ; and often when thinking about it, a tear or two steals forth from your eyes, and a heavy sigh comes from the heart. Yet you sorrow not as those without hope. Your loss is their infinite gain. They are only gone home a little before to join the beatific company—with Abel, the first who passed from earth to heaven, who will never die by the cruel hand of a brother again ; with Abraham, who will never experience another trial ; with David, who is singing in sweeter strains than he ever sung on earth ; with Jeremiah, whose eyes will never be again suffused with tears ; with the apostles, whose days of toil have long been over ; with the noble army of martyrs, whose bodies will never again be chained to Smithfield's stake, whose feet will never stand on the burning faggot, and whose voices will never be heard praising God amidst the roaring flames, but

eternally engaged in lauding and praising the Most High, and singing the sweet anthems of heaven; with the good and pious of modern days, and "a multitude which no man can number," all worshipping in one place, adoring one Saviour, celebrating one God.

Our friends who are there once wept and mourned as we do now. They had conflicts similar to ours, difficulties to surmount, trials to endure, bereavements to pass through, and afflictions to suffer; but, by cleaving close to the Shepherd's side, by prayer, patience, and perseverance, they have out-rode every storm, been entirely emancipated from the power of sin and Satan, and are gone safe home to the better land.

Fellow-Christian, be of good cheer. Let your joy be enhanced with the thought that though they cannot come back to you, you can go to them, share in the same bliss, and sing the same song. Remember, every conflict you have is one the less, every trial is lessening the number. Never were there so few before you as now, never so many behind you as at the present. Never nearer entering into the blissful

port of heaven than now. Never nearer treading the immortal shores than now. Never nearer wearing the lustrous crown than now. Never nearer joining your friends in glory than now. Never nearer GOING HOME than now. Oh, then, give to the wind all your doubts and fears. Trust in the same Saviour they did, rely upon the same precious promises, and lean upon the same omnipotent Arm. He will support, protect, and guide you safe through all the diversified scenes of life, uphold you in the article of death, bring you in to possess the good land, when your friends will welcome you home; and you with them will participate in its joys, and spend a glad eternity together.

Oh, how sweet the thought—GOING HOME!

No doubt some young Christian may scan over these few pages. In the death of Samuel, to whom reference has been made, can be seen a possible picture of yourself. God has seen fit to remove him from earth while in the bloom of youth. You, too, may soon be called away by death, you may have to follow in his foot-

steps. How many thousands of young disciples have crossed "the swellings of Jordan?" Could we but at this moment draw aside the curtain which hides heaven from our view, or were permitted to look through the pearly gates, and gaze upon the blood-besprinkled band, what a vast number of youthful Christians should we behold that augments that holy, happy company. Or if we only want a manifestation of the certainty that many die young, only take a walk through our graveyards, and read the various stones erected to the memory of the departed, a great number will be found telling the truthful tale, the young die as well as the aged. How necessary then to hold yourself in readiness, how important to have your lamp always trimmed and burning, ready to meet the bridegroom at any hour, at any moment.

To increase a deeper tone of piety, to incite a stronger reliance upon Christ, an impetus to a greater amount of usefulness, and to enjoy a brighter hope of GOING HOME to heaven, think much about eternity. How soon the word passes from the lips. But who can grasp

the mighty, the wondrous idea which it conveys? All thought is lost in its immensity, all time is swallowed up in its fathomless abyss, and all suggestions drowned in a boundless ocean. Who can measure it? who can solve the mystery? who tell its duration? Our minds may conceive of millions of years heaped upon millions, and millions piled on that again, and then millions multiplied to all that, till numbers lose themselves, or rather we are lost in them. Yet when all these are fled and gone, eternity remains the same. Try and picture it, give it serious deliberation. What an item is time compared to it, like one drop to the ocean itself, one star to the myriads that sparkle in the canopy of heaven, one grain of sand to the countless number on the sea-shore. And yet, by loving and serving God this short period, we shall dwell with Him, gaze with admiration upon Jesus, catch His approving smiles throughout all this endless eternity. Is not this then worth living for, worth suffering for, worth dying for? Oh then, young Christian, live for it, suffer for it; and if death should receive the

commission to knock down the tabernacle of clay in the morning of life, only shorter would be your days here, but longer the bliss, the joys of heaven;—less of the painful ordeals of this world, but longer to ascribe your gratitude to Jehovah for His marvellous love in redeeming you from the curse of the law, offering a free and full salvation on such easy accessible terms, blessing you so often, and refreshing your thirsty soul whilst passing through this barren wilderness; supporting you when crossing the cold stream of death, and bringing you to dwell with Him in the heavenly Canaan; where one sip from the pure river, one crumb of the celestial manna, one smile from Jesus, and one hour of its joys, will compensate for all your sufferings and toils down here. But it is for eternity.

“O heaven! the land of perfect, lasting bliss,
The peaceful home of all who know the Lord;
How bright Thy lovely mansions seem to us,
When, torn with pain and rack'd with heartfelt griefs,
We travel through this wilderness of woe.
No tears are there, no aching hearts are there,
No darkness there, no heaving sighs are there,
No tempter there, no sinful thoughts are there,
No death is there, no parting times are there,

No guilt is there, no fears nor doubts are there.
But peace is there, and cheerful hearts are there,
And light is there, and holy thoughts are there,
And Christ is there, and joyful praise is there,
Eternal bless and joys untold are there.
There are bright crowns of life for souls redeem'd;
And there are golden harps always in tune
For those who have been taught to praise their God;
There are white robes wash'd in a Saviour's blood,
For those who have believed in heaven on earth;
And there are palms of victory for all
Who fought the battles of their Lord below."

But while you are a sojourner on earth, let it be incumbent on you as a Christian to do all the good you can. Try to scatter some blessings around you as homeward you march, to diffuse some light on the moral darkness by which you may be surrounded. As the lighthouse is a beacon of safety to the tempest-tossed mariner, so in like manner may you prove to some poor benighted traveller, sailing across life's boisterous ocean, that, whilst the storms beat heavy upon him, and the huge waves dash against his frail bark, and all hope of rescue seeming to have fled, and is about to sink beneath the foaming billows, he may, through your instrumentality, take courage,

brave the storm, be directed to the haven of safety, and finally arrive safe home in the unruffled harbour of heaven.

Ever keep before your eye, coupled together, the precept and the promise, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest;" and "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." This is your sowing time, but in heaven will be your reaping time.

Remember great results often arise from small beginnings; though the seed you scatter may be tiny, yet if watered by the dews of heaven it will grow and prosperously thrive. The work may appear at first of little importance, yet, by the blessing of God, it may accomplish some great end, or effect a large amount of good.

Try, however humble the means may be, with all the powers you possess, to roll back the tide of iniquity, in dispelling the gloom and darkness in which so many thousands are en-

shrouded, in bursting the fetters of those who are held in vassalage by the wicked one, and in bringing up those now deep in the "horrible pit of mire and clay."

Emulate the noble example which some of the pious dead have left behind; and in whatever station of life Providence may place you, do something for God and something for man. Be useful in your day and generation; assist those who are striving for the amelioration of fallen humanity; and when you have passed to your eternal home it may be said, "He being dead yet speaketh," leaving behind you foot-prints upon the sands of time, that others may tread in the same steps.

Aim at living for some noble purpose; strive to fill a mission of mercy; seek in winning souls to Jesus, not forgetting, "he that winneth souls is wise;" "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever, and ever."

Oh! then, Christian, are you poor? Have you but little of this world's goods? scarcely

an earthly home in which to lay your weary head? Others around you perhaps are living at ease and blessed with abundance, whilst you are suffering the keen hand of poverty. They have enough and to spare, but you can scarcely tell how to steer your course through life. The little ones they weep around you, yet you know not how to cheer; your heart is often big with grief and your eyes filled with tears. But oh! take courage, think upon Him "who was rich, yet for your sake became poor, that you through His poverty might be made rich." Remember, your blessed Saviour was poor, so poor that He had not even where to lay His head. It may appear painful now; but it is of short duration. Up yonder, far above the sky, is your eternal home. There poverty is never known, and want is never felt. There you will sing the same song as they do, worship the same God, extol the same dear Redeemer, breathe the same pure air, share in the same bliss, wear a dazzling crown, wave a victor's palm, tune a golden harp, and arrayed with a white robe, washed in the blood of Jesus.

Are you tempted? Does the arch-fiend of hell, who is ever "going about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour," aim at your destruction? Are his darts often thrust at your heart? Does he try to insinuate that your religion is all vain, and a delusion? Are his visits few and far between? Ah! yes, how often he has tried for your ruin: how often he has endeavoured to steal into your heart, and suggest to you that your hope of heaven is a falsity, your religion a fable; and how quick in succession have been his visits. But oh! "resist the devil, and he will flee from you." Though the conflict may be severe, it cannot, it will not be long. This side the grave is your fighting time; but beyond it is your resting time. His satanic majesty will never enter the pearly gates. His baneful and blighting influence will never be felt at home in heaven: no, never.

Are you bereaved? Are you sorrowing because death has taken away one near and dear to you? One that has left a bright assurance behind that they are gone safe home, and now shine in the light of God? One that was af-

flicted here, but now is where affliction can never come?—

“Why do your tears run down,
And you heart be sorely riven,
For another gem in the Saviour's crown,
And another bright soul in heaven?”

They are only gone home a little before; and the time is gliding swiftly on when you will meet again. They are now beckoning you home, they are waiting your arrival, they are bidding you to stand the storm. View them by imagination before the throne. Catch a glimpse of that sweet country. Gaze by the eye of faith upon the blissful company; and whilst you look, think this is your future home, your eternal residence, “the house not made with mortal hands.”

Are you old? Have you ascended the mountain, reached the summit, and now nearly again at its base? Have the hairs of your head long grown white? Is your step feeble, now tottering upon the margin of the grave? Your race is nearly run, the journey is all but over. Oh! what storms you have weathered,

what battles fought, what victories won, what trials endured. But now it is drawing to a close. The body is about to return to its mother dust, but the soul to God who gave it. Your feet are almost touching the cold river ; you are on the borders of the narrow sea. " The time of your departure is at hand." You are " ready to be offered up." You " have fought a good fight." You " have kept the faith." A battle or two more, and then you are gone where youth is ever blooming, old age is never known, and a tottering step is never seen. Now, look across the valley between this and that, across the river which divides the two. There behold the fields of eternity, the temple of God, the new Jerusalem, the garden of the Lord, and the habitation of love ; and whilst gazing, let the look and the thought cheer you. This, too, is your future place of abode ; the angels, those happy choristers, your future associates ; the redeemed company already there, your joyful companions.

Oh then, Christian, whether young or old, rich or poor, in health or affliction, tempted or tried,

is not the prospect which lies before you cheering? Is not the thought of GOING HOME sweet? Are not your affections riveted to heaven? We again say, take courage; faint not; soon you will have left the seat of war, the battle-field, and gone to a richer clime, to breathe a purer atmosphere—numbered among the precious jewels of heaven. Oh! how sweet the thought—GOING HOME!

But while the prospect of GOING HOME is cheering to many, thousands, alas, are destitute of the blessing.

First, we address those who are young, and then those more advanced in years.

We have tried to comfort and animate those who have to pass through deep waters of affliction, experience sore trials, heavy sorrows, and manifold temptations, by the encouraging thought that it will not always last, but that they have a future home, a glorious inheritance, where all these "former things" will have passed away, and that they are advancing nearer and nearer to it every hour. But this is the sunniest part. There is a dark side as well. Though you may

be young, yet you possess a soul which will parallel the Deity himself. And you, too, are hastening home. But, oh ! what a home !

“A dungeon horrible on all sides round,
As one great furnace flamed ; yet from those flames
No light, but rather darkness visible,
Served only to discover sights of woe ;
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
That comes to all ; but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning sulphur, unconsum'd.”

We have also endeavoured to cheer the youthful Christian, prompt him to right actions, stimulate him in his work of faith and labour of love, encourage him to prosecute his journey with greater diligence, and to have a brighter hope of heaven, by portraying the brevity of time, the certainty of dying, the uncertainty of the time when, and the long eternity lying before him. What is said to him in relation to these solemn truths is equally applicable to you. Don't think that whilst you may walk through our several graveyards, and read the various tombstones, that all those who have died young have died the Christian's death.

We wish such was the case ; but we have too much reason to fear that many of them died without a knowledge of sins forgiven. Undoubtedly they looked forward to spend many years in pleasure, and have much of the enjoyment which this world affords. But their hopes were soon blighted, their expectations frustrated, their days shortened, their sun went down while it was yet day, and in the zenith of their joys the resistless hand of death came, and with its powerful grasp tore them off the stage of action, hurrying them unprepared into a boundless eternity.

As by imagination we went to the pearly gates of heaven, so we might to the black gates of hell ; and as we beheld thousands of young sharing in the bliss of the former, so we should see a vast number enduring the torments of the latter. Oh ! does it not make one shudder to think upon the terrible fact that there are many in remediless woe, possessed with immortal souls, who might have been saved from it ? Again and again were they entreated and warned to escape it, yet heedlessly they rushed on, dreaming it was time enough yet. Possibly they at-

tended the sanctuary of the Lord and the Sabbath-school, were taught the plan of salvation, read the Word of God, listened to various earnest sermons and thrilling addresses, gave due attention to the instructions of their kind teacher ; yet, alas ! alas ! only learned the plan of salvation theoretically, knowing nothing about its experimental power ; was a reader of the Word, but not a doer of the same. Now they would give a world, if possessed of it, to have another opportunity of seeking the forgiveness of their sins ; but " their die is cast, their doom fixed," they are eternally lost.

And no doubt you are filling your mind with the hope of living a great many years. You are gliding on through life apparently smooth ; calm and serene all appears with you at present ; the world is continually painting some enticing picture, so as to allure ; the devil is unceasingly whispering in your ear, " 'Tis time enough yet." But take heed, lest you become a prey to his malicious designs. You may be idle, but he is busy, ever on the alert to lead you astray, and ultimately drag you to his infernal den.

How often carnal nature and conscience is warring against each other. The former is saying, "Enjoy the pleasures of life, seek the amusements of the world, and when you get old, then think about giving God your heart." Whilst the latter, the inward monitor, is speaking with a loud voice, "Prepare to meet thy God." It knocks at the heart, and says, "Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Dear young friend, listen to this reprover, obey its reproof. Let the fleeting vanities of this world have no place in your heart. Look upon its so-called "enjoyments" with the utmost contempt. Seek that which is of nobler worth, of more vital importance, and far more essential and conducive to real happiness in this life, and which is alone necessary for a higher standard of life, yea, "life everlasting," in the world to come. Learn a lesson from the death of Samuel. He attended our Sabbath-school year after year, took an active part in its annual anniversaries, and no doubt looked forward to do so for years to come. But he is gone, gone that journey from whence he

cannot return. And probably you can remember one or more who have attended the same school as you do, perhaps belonged to the same class; you hoped to enjoy their company for a long time; but your ranks have been thinned, you have followed their mortal remains to "the house appointed for all living," stood beside the yawning grave, wept a tear because they were taken from among you, and the Sunday after, you joined in singing—

"Death has been here, and borne away
A brother from our side;
Just in the morning of his day,
As young as we, he died.

"Not long ago he fill'd his place,
And sat with us to learn;
But he has run his mortal race,
And never can return."

Many times else you have been called upon to sing that hymn. You often think upon those who have been torn away. You would like to see them again. But ah, you never, never will in this world. At the bar of God you will meet,—they to receive their reward, and you to have yours. God only knows how long your stay on

earth will be. It may be very short ; and you would not like to be lost. Therefore “ seek the Lord while he may be found ; ”—now, while your heart is tender, and more susceptible of receiving religious impressions than it will be in years to come if spared ;—now, while your mind is exempt from anxious cares, your time little engrossed with the business of life ;—now, because the Lord hath said, “ Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness ; ”—now, oh now, because life is so brief, so uncertain, and death is making its ravages in all directions, his arrows are flying fast and thick. How many a young man and young woman he is continually tearing away ; some whose cheeks not long ago were blooming fair as the rose, and whose countenance was the picture of health, but now they are mouldering in the grave, waiting the resurrection morn, whilst the spirit is soared away to its native home, or banished to the dreary regions of the lost. Oh, then, “ remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth.” You, too, may be looking strong and healthy, but in a few weeks that colour may fade away, and your body also

consigned to the tomb. Yea, at this moment you may be flourishing in the bloom of life, but before the present hour has rolled away, the destroying angel may have passed, the arrow may now be directed towards you, and you are left silent in death. Death is never tired in his work. Though busy night and day, hastening from house to house, from village to village, city to city, and country to country, yet he has no day of rest. Unweariedly he marches onward, paying the same respect to the beggar as the king. And soon, yea, very soon, he will direct his steps towards you. But how delightful, that when the time of your departure is come, to be enabled to fall asleep in the arms of Jesus, and bright angels bear your happy soul to the land of sweet repose. This is your privilege. But only by coming to Jesus may you seek and obtain that meekness which will prepare you for a seat at God's right hand, that will enable you boldly to challenge the king of terrors, triumphantly cross the river, and leave a blooming testimony behind that you are gone safe home to heaven.

Let your determination and prayer, therefore,
be—

“All my powers I dedicate,
Great Creator, to Thy praise;
Daily may I on Thee wait,
Daily walk in wisdom's ways.

“Shield me through this vale of tears;
Let thy grace my heart subdue.
Thine be all my months and years,
Be they many, Lord, or few.”

In the past few pages our aim has been to win the youth to Christ thus early in life. But how true, and no less true than painful, how few, comparatively speaking, of our young men and young women, are endeavouring to be made a blessing; how few of them are aiming to leave the world better than what they found it. Unhappily the great majority, in some way or other, are seeking to please carnal nature rather than please God,—rather be a slave to the imaginary pleasures of sin than be known as a follower of Jesus,—rather have the devil as their master, be under his tyrannical power, and bear his galling yoke, than to be servants of Christ,—rather risk themselves to become miserable vic-

tims and wretched outcasts in society, and be doomed to everlasting destruction, than “adorn the doctrines of the gospel,” and possessing a hope of going home to heaven.

How our theatres are crammed,—how Bacchus is worshipped,—what scenes of vice and wickedness are continually meeting our eyes,—what hours are squandered away in places of profanity and places of public amusements, tending to debase, to degrade, and demoralise. What money is spent, what lives are sacrificed, what prospects blighted, what talents thrown away, what homes wrecked, what characters stained, yea, even ruined, and, above all, what souls lost, just for the sake of those amusements, and to gratify a sensual appetite.

What an amazing amount of good might be accomplished if their influence was exerted in that which was right,—if their energies, their exertions, were thrown into the opposite scale,—their talents consecrated to God, their hours devoted to a better purpose, and were emulous of that which is of more value and importance, what families would be blest, what hearts would

be cheered, what eyes saved from tears, what honour brought to Jesus, what souls won to Christ, and what numbers more would have the happy prospect of GOING HOME to the land of beauty and perpetual serenity, the blissful habitation where God sits enthroned in all His infinite glory and eternal perfections.

To such we would impress upon your mind the folly of living in sin, the necessity of a change of heart being indispensable to true happiness, and which alone will enable you to be useful in time, and admit you to the joys of Paradise. We also solicit your prayerful perusal of the following pages, as we pass on to those who are of more mature years and those advanced in age.

Have you spent the best of your days in the service of Satan? Is the morning of life with you gone, and not yet begun to answer the end for which you were sent into the world? Has God been expostulating, pathetically and entreatingly inviting you to Himself, yet you are still far, far from Him? Has the sweet voice of mercy been crying after you all these years,

“ Turn ye, turn ye, for why will you die ? ” and yet you still refuse, yet you resolutely and determinately rush on in sin ? Has not the amazing love which Jesus manifested in His condescension, His humiliation and sufferings in your behalf, drawn your heart to Him ? Has not the unparalleled melting story of the Cross melted your heart into tenderness and love ? Or does it all appear as an idle tale ? What, then, do you think about dying, and passing into the presence of that God you have treated with such indifference, “ to give an account of the deeds done in the body ? ” Remember you, too, have a home before you, and that you are posting your passage there as fast as time can carry you. You are hastening with rapid speed to that place “ where the worm dieth not, and the fire is never quenched,” and what a recompense it will be for all your toils and servitude in the cause of your present master. Its everlasting despair, its eternal agonies, its exquisite pain, its endless distress, has been painted in all its blackest colours. Of its wretchedness, its unlimited sorrows, its unceasing duration you have

been taught, yet fearless and unmoved you stand upon the brink of hell ; and should death now strike the deadly blow, this would prove your unhappy home.

Die you must, for it has gone forth from the mouth of the Almighty,—“ Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt again return.” Oh ! then, stop a few moments, and seriously consider upon your latter end ; call in your scattered thoughts, collect thy wandering desires, and meditate with solemn awe on this important subject. It concerns you. You have a part in the lot. You have a share in the matter. You are a dying creature walking on the verge of an awful eternity. But possibly you are fondly hoping for a long range of years yet to come, putting off the “ one thing needful ” until some future day ; dashing the cup of salvation from your lips, choosing rather to drink the dregs of sin, and saying with one of old, “ Go thy way for this time, when I have a more convenient season I will call for thee.” Poor, short-sighted mortal, do not forget, He who ruleth over all hath assigned to each a limit, beyond which you cannot, cannot

go. That convenient season has hurled thousands into the bottomless pit; and highly probable, if you wait and wait, dreaming it will come, with you too it will be too late; you also will have sunk down to a burning hell, and wail in deep despair, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved."

The volume of inspiration has told you with peculiar force, and remarkable plainness, the brevity of life. It has compared it to a tale that is told, to the rapidity of a flood, to a vapour that appeareth for a little time, to a flower which flourisheth in the morning but by night fadeth away, and to a shadow that is quickly gone. You are as confident that you shall die as you are sure of your present existence, and that ere long you must stand in the presence of a holy God. Yet how careless, how indifferent—neglecting all concerns about the soul. Busy with the world, seeking its pleasures; toiling hard from morning to night, scheming and planning how to amass great riches, and yet the most important business of all is neglected—is thrown aside. That which

is trivial and fleeting is first sought after, but that which is of the utmost importance, the salvation of the soul, is left out of the question—that must go by. You may be deluding yourself with the idea that you shall be able to attend to that on a sick-bed. Friend, has God despatched one of the angels of heaven to inform you that you shall have one? Or have you been inspired by the Holy Spirit to that effect? Has not the Lord emphatically declared, “We know not what a day or an hour may bring forth.” Have not hundreds had to exchange worlds in a moment? Some, perhaps, you have been intimately acquainted with. They suddenly died, either prepared or unprepared. And God alone knows how and when you will be taken hence. It may be the sleep which you take to-night will be the sleep of death.

Ask now, with all the solemnity which becomes so momentous a question, Where am I tending? and if I should be hurried into the presence of God, what sort of reception should I meet with? To what home am I now hastening? Fellow-traveller to eternity, two

ways there are for the whole human race, and to two quite distinct homes they lead. The one at its beginning, and so onward for some way, is pleasant to carnal nature, is strewed with worldly pleasures and sensual gratifications, but growing darker and darker, more rough and rugged as it advances, till ultimately its end proves to be in hell, the den of devils, and only place for lost souls. The other, difficult at the entrance, requiring many, many sacrifices, much self-denial, numerous trials, great and many conflicts, fighting many battles, but gradually increasing in light and beauty, growing brighter and brighter, until it terminates in the blissful regions of immortal glory, the residence of God, and the home of all His people. One or the other of these roads you are now traversing, and every day drawing nearer to one of these places. If unpardoned, if you have not been to the Cross and had your heart sprinkled with the blood of Jesus, you are on the highway to ruin, preparing yourself for a home in hell, and endangering yourself to its torments every moment.

Reader ! to which of these homes are you

bound? Have you believed with your heart unto righteousness? Is the life you now live, a life of faith on the Son of God? Have you a saving interest in the blood of Christ? What is conscience saying? Is the reply, No, no? If so, in some silent moments when, pondering over the certainty of your dying, and the possibility of being lost, your feelings are harrowed up with the thought, that if the pale horse and his rider should overtake you in your present position, you must sink lower than the grave, into that place where God hath said, "There shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth," where you must be

" Burning continually, yet unconsumed ;
Dying perpetually, yet never dead ;
For ever wasting, yet enduring still."

And should it be your unhappy lot to be hurled over the battlements of hell, and thrust into this burning gulf, it will not be because God has left anything undone, for what more could He have done than He already has? He has sent His only-begotten, dearly-beloved Son into this world, and you have been redeemed by His

precious blood ; but, remember, there you will be irredeemable. A salvation has been procured, and is now offered to you, so that your state is recoverable ; but there it will be irrecoverable. Here the lost can be sought and be saved, "for Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost ;" but there the lost can have no reprieve. No door or way of escape, but lost for ever and ever.

You may have stood by the side of a dying friend, a relative, or even one nearer by the ties of nature, just when they were about crossing the cold flood, entering into their future state, going to their eternal home, on the threshold of the blissful inheritance, and as you stood there, expecting every hour to see the eyes close in death, tears trickled over your cheeks, and your heart heaved many a sigh. To their dying request, perhaps, you promised to give God your heart, and by and by meet again in heaven. Months, or may be years, have passed away ; but that first promise has not been fulfilled. It made an indelible impression on your mind ; and often, when alone, no eye beholding you

but God's, it rushes in upon you with shame and reproach. You are certain that if God were to take you from time, you should be everlastingly separated from that one you engaged to meet in the better world.

Oh, if you should be lost, what anguish will it cause to take a retrospect of the past, what agonies will rend the soul, what inconceivable pain will be caused by reflecting upon the unfulfilled promise, the dying request of that dear saint, shining bright in heaven, where you might have gone, yea, you vowed to go. Oh, be entreated to fulfil that promise now. Do not barter your soul away for mere worldly gain ; do not risk that immortal spark to please carnal nature ; do not chance that priceless gem for a few empty honours or paltry pleasures ; do not grasp at the shadow and lose the substance. The one is transient, the other is for ever. The one is like a vapour or passing cloud, soon vanished, the other is everlasting. The one is gone when life is over, the other will endure as long as the pillars of heaven shall stand. If you lose your soul, you lose your *all*. Oh then, as that is at

stake, abandon sin at once and for ever. Let the recording angel, who is waiting for the decision, carry back the glad news to heaven that you have embraced the religion of Jesus ; let the angelic choir rejoice over your salvation ; let your name be now registered in the Lamb's book of life ; and instead of having your prospect clouded with the gloomy thought of going to that fearful home which now lies before you, have the pleasing thought of GOING HOME to those mansions of paradise ; and the joyful anticipation of one day reigning with the vast assembly " now before the throne, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands," and bear some humble part in the song they now and evermore will sing.

Others have been brought down to death's door ; before that, the undying soul was cared nothing about. God's people were looked upon with contempt ; to them they appeared to be " above all men the most miserable." But as soon as sickness attacked their frame, and, to all human appearance, death was drawing near, there arose a concern for the soul, religion was

“the one thing needful,” the servant of God was requested to come and point them to the Saviour, and plead with the Majesty on high in their behalf. Oh ! what a contrast ! And yet such circumstances are continually transpiring around us. Possibly the reader may be one. Upon the bed of affliction you wrestled in prayer with God. You supplicated to a throne of grace, probably for the first time, in sincerity. You covenanted with the Lord, that if He would restore you again to health, you would lead a different life. You requested some one to visit you, to pray with and for you. With penitential grief you anxiously asked, “What must I do to be saved ?” You vowed, if you were spared, “Let others do as they will, as for me, I will serve the Lord.”

Your earnest request was granted. God heard and answered your prayer ; and now, in return, have you fulfilled your engagement ? has that covenant been performed ? or is it broken ? Can you catch up the language of the Psalmist, and say, “Before I was afflicted I went astray ; but now have I kept thy word. Thou art good,

and doest good ; teach me thy statutes." God knows. He has it recorded against you. His eye penetrates into your heart. Your thoughts and intentions are all known to Him. If you have, well. Go work in His vineyard. Whether your talents are few or many, whether your sphere is great or small, whether your circumstances are good or bad, whether your influence is much or little, there is a work for you. True, the influence which you have may be small, yet you can exert it in the noble cause of winning souls to Jesus. Your talents, though few, yet if devoted to that which God desires they should, may be the means of saving a fellow-creature from the jaws of hell, and by and by to sparkle as a diadem in your crown. Though humble may be your circumstances, yet the field for usefulness and doing good is so large there is room for each, however feeble the effort may be. Oh ! then try, in leading some wanderer into the fold of Christ, in bringing a poor exile to the foot of the cross, be instrumental in elevating some poor sinner above the ruins of the fall, so that he, as well as you, may

possess the bright prospect, the sweet thought, of GOING HOME to dwell for ever in heaven. Tread in the footsteps of your Divine Master, so that, when He comes to judge the world, you may be among the happy number who shall hear Him say, "Well done, good and faithful servants."

"'Tis not for man to trifle. Life is earnest,
And sin is here;
An age is but the falling of a leaf,
A dropping tear.
We have no time to sport away the hours;
All must be earnest in a world like ours.
"Not many lives, but only one have we,
Frail fleeting man;
How sacred should that one life ever be,
That narrow span!
Day after day fill'd up with blessed toil,
Hour after hour still bringing in new soil."

But it may be you have not given an answer in the affirmative—you still persist in the practice of sin. That promise is violated. How unkind you have acted towards God, who has been so kind and compassionate to you. But do not forget His righteous anger is resting upon you. He has the power to extinguish the spark of life in a moment of time, and you are then launched into a long, long eternity. He may

not privilege you with another opportunity to repent on a sick-bed, but may cut you down even before you can utter a word. And when that great assembly is convened before Him, you will take your place, justice will drag you from the grave, and with reluctant feelings you will go to the judgment-seat to hear your awful doom thundered from the lips of the Almighty, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

How painful to think, even in this enlightened day, how little the human mind is affected by the most solemn truths of revelation. How surprising the fact that the heart is so little impressed with the shortness of time, the uncertainty when death will come, and the nearness of eternity with its tremendous realities. How awfully true, that the great majority of mankind even in this highly-favoured country, this gospel land, are living without God or without hope of any future bliss; thousands professing to believe, yea, do believe in the Word of God, yet live as if futurity were nothing, the promises and threatenings therein contained were a blank,

heaven a fable, and hell without any meaning. There is a respect, or mere verbal veneration, for its pages, but a dislike to its holy requirements. They know they must die, yet live as if they did not believe it;—assured that life is quite uncertain, they yet lay plans and concoct schemes for years to come, as if they had a long lease upon their life;—profess to adhere to the fact that God will render unto every one according to the deeds done in the body, and yet act as if their so fancied “little sins” would never be noticed in the day of final retribution; as if they would say to the Almighty, “Not guilty,” and then have a full acquittal of all their past transgressions. And a vast number more, although surrounded with the light of gospel truth, and living in this highly-exalted nation, are expecting to be saved—but without Christ. They are daily advancing and drawing nearer and nearer to an unbounded eternity, hoping in the mercy and goodness of God, that He will, because of their good works, their sympathies and benevolence towards the poor, their assistance in the extension of the kingdom of Christ, and the

regularity of their attendance at some place of worship, admit them to the realms of eternal felicity, where they shall dwell in His immediate presence for ever and ever. Fellow-mortal, is this the dangerous ground you are standing on? Is this the delusive hope you are filling your mind with? Is this the foundation you intend trying to build upon? Oh! reflect. Oh! think what a feeble one; only let the winds of affliction blow, it will totter and shake; and let death come, the whole fabric will tumble to the ground, and the soul sink into the dreary chambers of hell. Bear in mind our state in the next world has not the least connexion with our outward condition in this. Here the rich man may fare sumptuously every day, have all the honours this world can lavish upon him, his title, name, and a number of letters attached to it, be endowed with marvellous intellectual powers, vaunt of his lineage, and boast of his amazing wealth, yet in the world to come even destitute of a drop of cold water to cool his parched tongue. Here he may live in affluence, have his lofty and magnificent palace, his broad

acres of land, accumulate the treasures and riches of this world ; yet, after all, shed tears of anguish in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. Here one may live under the sound of the gospel, his pathway paved with good desires, generous to every good and philanthropic institution, support the Church of Christ, be liberal to the poor, live in hopes of getting to heaven, yea, even make a profession of religion, yet ultimately be doomed to everlasting torments.

While, on the other hand, a Lazarus may be poor, be looked upon with disdain, suffer hunger and privations, and have no earthly home to call his own, yet in the next world, can eat of the tree of life, drink of the crystal stream that gushes from beneath the throne, recline his head upon the bosom of Abraham, and dwell in heaven with all the bright and pure intelligents of that holy place.

Here a man may have the frowns of the world, his name spoken of as evil, his character railed at, his pockets empty, his cottage or dwelling-house poor, his table scanty, his clothes all tattered

and torn ; and yet in the world to come, have the eternal smiles of Jesus, a mansion to dwell in, a spotless robe to wear, and his brow adorned with a glittering crown.

God does not look at what a man *has*, but what *he is*. Christianity is a life, not a theory. Religion is something within, a living principle, not a mere outward form ; and the reality of this you will prove when arranged at His bar, at the great and grand world assize, where each one will have to render an account of their stewardship, and receive their just reward.

How sad, then, if, after enjoying the comforts and happiness of an earthly home, you should find your way down into hell ! How sad, that, though you may now pile gold heap upon heap, add to your former riches house after house and field after field, finally you should weep and groan in the caverns of the lost ! How sad, that, after living in the midst of the blaze of gospel light, having your open Bibles, hearing their sacred truths proclaimed week after week, having so many prayers offered in your behalf, so many invitations to look to the

Saviour, you should after all spend a doleful eternity in a home peopled with devils and lost spirits ! How past privileges will vividly come to your remembrance and augment your torments ! How conscience will sting ! In vain will you wish for another opportunity to obtain salvation ; in vain will you pray for pardoning mercy ; in vain will you lift your eyes towards heaven, and, with a sorrowful countenance and a contrite heart, beg God to look propitiously upon you ; in vain will you shed burning tears of repentance, and cry for help.

The home which you are exposing yourself to, if unconverted, is hell ; an eternity of pain, misery, darkness, and undying death. It is no cunningly-devised fable of man's invention. God himself hath spoken of it in unmistakable terms. He has distinctly said, " The wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the nations that forget God," and " He that believeth not shall be damned." And to be cast into hell, is to be driven from the presence of the Lord, from the society of angels, from the company of those who have died in the faith, and to be for ever shut

out of heaven. To be lost is more than this ; this alone would be sad enough. But added to that is the unutterable torments which must be endured. The horrid companionship of devils and all lost souls. The terrible anguish, the cutting remorse which memory will awake and cause, whilst gazing back over a misspent life. The writhing in perpetual agony, and wailing in indescribable sorrow. The cry ascending unceasingly from this "dungeon of unfading fire," "I am tormented in these flames." The great mandate sounding dolefully through its vast domain, and resounding to its utmost limit, "I called, but ye refused ; I stretched out mine arm, but ye regarded it not ; now I will laugh at your calamity, and mock now your fear is come upon you." The question is oft-repeated, How long, how long will this be my dreadful home ? Is there no way of cutting short the duration of these pains ? No hope of ever being released from these groans, these tears, this anguish ? Will there never dawn one faint ray of light upon this awful darkness ? How long, how long must I dwell and roll in these de-

vouring yet unconsuming flames ? But amidst this

“ Sad variety of hell,”

the hopeless and mourning tale is heard above all, sounding through the infernal pit, For ever, for ever !

Now ask yourself the question, What are all the pleasures of this short life ? What are all the honours of this world ? What all its greatness ? What all its conquests ? What all its treasures, vast as they may be ? What all its glories ? What all its riches, if that after all I find my way down to hell ? And what are all these things in comparison to the joys, the riches, the glories, and the honours of heaven ?

Once more, are you a stranger to converting grace ? If so, you are dead to your own interest. If you are a stranger to the love of Jesus, you are a stranger indeed ; a stranger to the sweetest and best thing that any human being can know. 'Tis that, and that only, will constitute your real and solid happiness in this world, and be your happiest portion when crossing the last river—the river death. You may resist con-

viction now, you may say to the workings of the Holy Spirit, "Go thy way for this time." But you cannot to death, you cannot resist that, you must cross there. There is no exemption, no alternative here. You must, you must pass down through its cold waters. Past history and events have confirmed this; and if you cross before salvation is secured, you are gone for ever, far beyond the reach of hope or mercy. Oh then, remember the future depends upon the present. "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." Fly, then, to the only hope set before you in the gospel. Take your own stand. Plead the sinner's plea. Address yourself to the Almighty, "who is slow to anger and plentiful in mercy." Jesus is pleading in your behalf, He is inviting you to Himself. Breathe the prayer in faith—

"Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee!
Let the water and the blood,
From thy wounded side which flow'd,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and power.

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling;

Naked, come to Thee for dress ;
Helpless, look to Thee for grace ;
Vile, I to the fountain fly,
Wash me, Saviour, or I die."

Go, kneel as a suppliant at the feet of Jesus. In Him *alone* can you be saved, saved in life, saved when dying, saved from the bitter lamentations of hell. And *only* through Him can you possess the bright prospect—the sure and certain hope of GOING HOME to live in heaven, and share in its unrivalled glories, bask in its unclouded sunlight, sing in harmonious strains the immortal song of Moses and the Lamb through the measureless and unceasing ages of eternity.

And now, dear reader, fellow-probationer in time, fellow-traveller to a wide eternity, this little book is almost come to a close. And should it be made an instrument through God of leading one soul to the footstool of divine mercy, more than the writer's object will be gained, and will more than compensate for his sending it forth. And if you have not experienced a change of heart, oh ! may it be the means of leading you to the cross, to seek that

happiness which is only to be found by believing in Jesus. And by and by, when you and I stand at the bar of God, may it be seen, that through its instrumentality you were induced to seek the forgiveness of all your sins, and find peace and rest in the atoning blood of Christ.

A word or two more to the Christian ere we conclude. Not only have we tried in these few pages to cheer and encourage you ; but also in bringing some poor sinner to the foot of the cross ; and though feeble the effort has been, our prayer is, that many by it may be inclined to bend their steps thither, and obtain that meetness which will entitle them to this unfading inheritance, yea, have the bright prospect of GOING HOME to be for ever with the Lord.

And we hope we have not altogether failed in cheering you in your struggles through life to gain this better land. We trust your prospects are somewhat brightened, your faith somewhat stronger, your love for your future home increased, and that you are determined henceforth to persevere, and earnestly—

“Press through storms of every kind,
Leave the world and its cares behind,
To gain a crown above.”

Fellow-traveller, travelling through the same howling wilderness, journeying to the same country, bound for the same home. Though painful may seem the discipline by which God is leading you on ; but rest assured it is done in infinite love for some wise purpose : and in the final disclosure of all events, He will reveal to you the reason for His so dealing with you. Your cup may be composed of bitter ingredients, yea, of a mixed and mingled character ; but it is done by a kind Father's hand. Your journey through life may be rough, but take courage, it will not be long. Your pathway may not be the easiest ; but it soon will be over. Here you have your cross to bear ; but there you will have your crown to wear. Dark clouds may continually darken your sky ; but you are nearing a sunnier clime. Your sorrows here often oppress you ; but you are going to a place where the happy inmates know no sorrow. Tears often bedew your cheeks ; but there God will

wipe all tears from your eyes. Here you suffer hunger and thirst ; but there you will be led forward to fountains of living waters. Now, whilst urging your way homeward you often feel wearied ; but there the weary are for ever at rest. There sickness will never blight, there pain will never come, there sin will never tempt, there death will never enter ; for there " the former things are passed away." If faithful unto death, this land of glory, this city of light, this region of unspotted purity, is yours. You will dwell in it, you will possess it, and there see Jesus your great Redeemer, be with Jesus, and above all, be like Jesus : " For it doth not yet appear what we shall be ; but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him ; for we shall see Him as He is."

THE END.





